



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MARINA DIMITRIJEVIC
COUNTY BOARD CHAIRWOMAN

For Immediate Release August 3, 2012
Contact: Harold Mester, Public Information Manager
414/278-4051 or harold.mester@milwcnty.com
Velia Alvarez, Public Information Assistant
414/278-4230 or velia.alvarez@milwcnty.com

UPDATE ON OFFICE OF COMMUNITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Board Chairwoman sent the following communication to the County Board, County Executive, Comptroller, and Department Heads this morning:

“The Office of Community Business Development Partners (CBDP) is responsible for administering the County’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. Contract compliance is a specific responsibility of the CBDP. The CBDP reports to the County Board of Supervisors, and this Board has always been very supportive of CBDP’s mission.

“Recently, I suspended without pay the Director of CBDP pending the results of a reported investigation into allegations of misconduct in public office. Since that time, I have taken a few precautionary measures, including:

- Freezing travel of CBDP staff
- Placing a temporary hold on contract approval by CBDP staff pending an independent review; and
- Assigning the processing of CBDP payroll to the County Board Office Coordinator

“It is imperative that the CBDP be equipped properly, so it can continue to function and ensure DBE participation in Milwaukee County procurement, public works and professional services contracts. We appreciate the efforts of staff to ensure continuity of services to clients.

“Therefore, I am taking the step of appointing Mr. Nelson Soler as the Interim Director of CBDP. This appointment is for a temporary time period, pending the conclusion of the investigation. In order to avoid an appearance of a conflict of interest, Mr. Soler already has terminated his contract with Milwaukee County. If there are pending invoices, they will be reviewed by the Milwaukee County Auditor.

“Mr. Soler is the founder of the Multicultural Entrepreneurship Institute, where he helps minority-owned businesses become certified. His resume includes a wealth of experience from We Energies, UW-Milwaukee, and the Milwaukee School of Engineering. His fresh perspective, and the professional contacts he has developed, will help fulfill the mission of the CBDP office to create opportunities for small and minority-owned businesses.

“UMOS named Mr. Soler the Hispanic Man of the Year in 2011, and he currently participates in a number of boards, including MMAC's Business Council (Co-Chair), the Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce, the Latino Entrepreneurial Network of Southeast Wisconsin, the Ethnically Diverse Coalition of Chambers of Wisconsin, and Milwaukee's Green Team.

“I ask that you welcome Mr. Soler and work cooperatively with him as he transitions into his new responsibilities with Milwaukee County.”

###